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ABSTRACT

This document is a collection of supplemental classroom materials on Czechoslovakia to be photocopies for use in secondary schools in conjunction with the Education for Democracy Project. After decades of Soviet domination and communist dictatorship, Eastern European countries are demanding democracy, human rights, and an end to the Soviet Union's military presence. The democratic revolution in Eastern Europe can serve to help students gain a greater appreciation of and interest in the subject of history, and attain a deeper understanding of the ideas and principles of democracy. This collection of materials offers an historical framework for considering current events, but is focused on the events, ideas, issues, and personalities that have propelled Czechoslovakia's successful democracy movement. A timeline, maps and a college of historic headlines are included to give a basic historical context. A vocabulary for junior high classes or classes with little or no previous exposure to international studies, editorial cartoons, and a resource guide are also included. An update of the timeline contains two entries from 1990 and two from 1991. Sections include: (1) The Establishment of the Communist State; (2) Reform and Reaction; (3) Voices, which is a collection of excerpts from creative writings by various novelists and playwrights; (4) Documents of Dissent; (5) On Change, which is "comprised a various newspaper articles; and (6) a biography of Vaclav Havel. (Author/DK)

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ED 374 023

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY PROJECT

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

A SELECTION OF TEACHING MATERIALS

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

"Where did young people, who had never known another system, get their longing for truth, their love of freedom, their political imagination, their civic courage and civic responsibility?"

—PRESIDENT VACLAV HAVEL
JANUARY 1, 1990

Illustration by Jan Brychta for Ludvik Vaculik's A Cup of Coffee With My Interrogator

SO 023 315

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, AFL-CIO

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"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOL. CXXXIX No. 48,180 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1989 40 CEN

Havel Chosen President; Prague Crowd Celebrates

In Cradle of Rumanian Revolt, Anger Quickly Overcame Fear

Opposition Leader Was Inspired by the Children

VATICAN IS BLAMIN U.S. FOR IMPASSE ON NORIEGA'S FA

LATE CITY EDITI

"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOL. CXVII No. 40,387 NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 1968 10 CEN

CZECHOSLOVAKIA INVADED BY RUSSIANS AND FOUR OTHER WARSAW PACT FORCES; THEY OPEN FIRE ON CROWDS IN PRAGUE

ork Times.

LATE CITY EDITION

TANKS ENTER CITY

Deaths Are Reported — Troops Surround Offices of Party

LATE CITY EDITION

ENATE TAX ACTION ET AS OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL RISES

earings Will Begin Monday; $6,500,000,000 Cut Is Seen Pared to $5,000,000,000

ASURE TO FOLLOW ERP

Acheson Seeks to Restore ess-Profits

CZECH COMMUNISTS CHARGE OPPONENTS PLAN A REVOLT; TAKE CONTROL IN SLOVAKIA

U.N. Palestine Force Is By Mr. D

New York Times.

FEBRUARY 24, 1948 THREE CENTS

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 1939. THREE CENTS

HITLER FOLLOWS HIS TROOPS INTO PRAGUE; CZECHS JEER THE NAZIS; NEW REGIME SET UP; HUNGARIANS RESISTED IN CARPATHO-UKRAINE

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Bohemia and Moravia Likely to Retain Names

FIGHT IN RUTHENIA

Some Hungarian Troops Reach Polish Border by Western Passages

UKRAINIANS ARE HOSTILE

Chamberlain Sees Munich Flouted; Cancels Trade Parleys in Berlin

British Officials Are Bitter Over the Nazis' Broken Pledges — Debate Whether to Recall Ambassador From Germany

By FREDERICK KUH Jr.

3

CZECH AREA SEIZED

Chancellor's Banner Is Flying Over Capital's Historic Citadel

FISTS SHAKEN AT SOLDIERS

People Weep, Hurl Snowballs at Tanks—Secret Police Begin Hunt—Curfew Set

By EMIL LENGYEL

NOTE TO TEACHERS

This is the first in a series of materials on Eastern Europe, produced by the American Federation of Teachers to be photocopied for use in secondary schools.

Recent events in Eastern Europe mark a major change in the post-World War II world. After decades of Soviet domination and communist dictatorship, Eastern European countries are demanding democracy, human rights and an end to the Soviet Union's military presence.

We hope that the democratic revolution in Eastern Europe will also serve to help American students gain a greater appreciation of and interest in the subject of history, and attain a deeper understanding of the ideas and principles of democracy, for which millions of Eastern Europeans have risked their lives.

This collection of materials offers an historical framework for considering current events, but is focused on the events, ideas, issues and personalities that have propelled Czechoslovakia's successful democracy movement. A timeline, maps and a collage of historic headlines are included to give a basic historical context. A vocabulary, for Junior High classes or classes with little or no previous exposure to international studies, editorial cartoons and a resource guide are also included.

Materials were designed to be used in American History, European History, World History, Area Studies or Current Affairs courses. We have tried to design the packet to be flexible enough to be used in many different ways. Some suggestions are:

- Using the material as a unit, to be completed in one week. The timeline, maps and photographs can be handed out on the first day, with each section as assigned reading for the next class. Section questions can be used for discussion or homework, and students can be asked to pick one activity as a long-term project.
- Joseph Skvorecky's historical profile of Vaclav Havel can be assigned, with the timeline, maps and photographs as context. The packet can then be used as resource material for assigned activities or written reports.
- The entire packet can be handed out at one time, with students given two or three weeks to read the unit. One or two classes can be devoted to discussion, and students can then be asked to choose an activity as a long-term project.
- In World History or European History courses, sections can be assigned as additional reading, scheduled to coincide with historical periods in the general course of study. Essays answering the section questions, or activities could be assigned, perhaps as extra credit.
- For students in World History, European History or Current Affairs courses who wish to do a term paper or project on Eastern Europe, both the packet and the resource guide can be offered.
- One or two reading selections from each section can be assigned to students along with the Vaclav Havel profile. In American History courses, this could be done, either to coincide with the historical period in the general course of study, or as supplemental material when U.S. foreign policy or U.S.-Soviet relations are being discussed.

We hope that this series of materials will be a useful contribution to the historical, current affairs and primary source resources currently available to U.S. educators.

ABOUT THE EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY PROJECT

Education for Democracy, a joint project of the American Federation of Teachers, the Educational Excellence Network and Freedom House, was launched in 1987 with a statement of principles signed by more than 150 prominent Americans. Its purpose is to encourage schools to impart to students the learning necessary for an informed, reasoned allegiance to the ideals and practices of a democratic society.

Czechoslovakia/Spring 1990

CENTRAL EUROPE

PRE-WORLD WAR I

POST-WORLD WAR II

Warsaw Pact Member States

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

GOVERNMENT: Transitional coalition dominated by non-communists.

CAPITAL: Prague.

SIZE: Slightly larger than New York state.

POPULATION: 15,658,079.

ETHNIC GROUPS: 64.3% Czech, 30.5% Slovak, 3.8% Hungarian, 1.4% other.

TIMELINE

1918 Tomas Garrigue Masaryk leads his country to independence from the Austro-Hungarian Empire following WWI. The state of Czechoslovakia, formed from the lands of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia and including 3 million ethnic Germans, is proclaimed on Oct. 28. Masaryk assumes the presidency.

1920 A constitution, establishing a parliamentary democracy in Czechoslovakia, is ratified.

1935 Czechoslovakia, already an ally of France, establishes an alliance with the Soviet Union, aimed at containing Nazi Germany.

Masaryk retires. Edvard Benes assumes the presidency.

1937 Masaryk dies.

1938 In February, Hitler vows to protect "Germans who are subject to another country." With his eye on the Sudetenland, a part of Czechoslovakia with a large German population, Hitler incites a campaign of ethnic unrest.

In September, Hitler declares his support for German-speaking Czechoslovak citizens' "right of self-determination." The Soviet Union states that it will not defend Czechoslovakia unless France also does so. In an effort to avoid war with Germany, France and its main ally, Great Britian, meet with Hitler in Munich, Germany. The agreement that they reach, known as the "Munich Pact," yields to all of Hitler's stated demands and clears the way for Germany to seize portions of Czechoslovakia unopposed.

Benes, left with no choice, accepts Hitler's terms and the Sudetenland, southern Slovakia and southern Ruthenia are all lost. Benes resigns.

1939 On March 15, Nazi Germany invades the rest of Czechoslovakia.

In August, the Nazi-Soviet (Hitler-Stalin or Molotov-Ribbentrop) 'Non-Aggression Pact' is signed, an agreement which includes secret protocols dividing Central and Eastern Europe between the two powers.

WWII begins; in September, Germany invades Poland; the Soviet Union invades Poland's eastern territories alloted in the secret protocols; France and Britain declare war against Germany.

Benes establishes a government in exile with Jan Masaryk, the first president's son, as his foreign minister.

1940 Germany invades France.

1941 In June, Hitler invades the Soviet Union, betraying the German-Soviet alliance.

1943 The Soviet Union begins its great military offensive against Germany. The Benes government establishes another alliance with the U.S.S.R.

1945 In May, WWII ends in Europe; Soviet and Allied forces liberate Czechoslovakia. Occupation-strength Soviet forces remain until the end of the year. The Benes government assumes administration of the country. Aided by the Soviet presence, the Czechoslovak Communist Party amasses a disproportionate share of power, including control of the army and the police.

The U.S. begins to demobilize in Europe, while the Soviet Union begins the process of establishing Soviet-style Communist governments in Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and the Soviet-occupied German territories.

1946 Benes is elected president in Czechoslovakia. In parliamentary elections, the Communists receive 2.7 million out of 7.1 million votes (38%). Benes asks Klement Gottwald, head of the Communist Party, to form a government.

1948 In February, the Communists declare that there is a Slovakian conspiracy against the Czechoslovak government, aided by a continued Soviet presence. they seize control of power. Benes resigns. Gottwald becomes president.

On March 10, under mysterious circumstances, Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk falls to his death from a bathroom window. Vladimir Clementis, a prominent Communist, becomes the new foreign minister.

1952-4 In Czechoslovakia, a period of Stalinist repression is inaugurated by the 1952 execution of 11 prominent citizens, including Clementis.

1953 Gottwald dies. Antonin Novotny assumes control of the Czechoslovak Communist Party.

In the Soviet Union, Stalin dies. Nikita Khrushchev assumes control of the Communist Party in 1956-7.

1962-7 In Czechoslovakia, a period of gradual liberalization and de-Stalinization brings on public pressure for more substantive reform.

1964 Fearing some of Khrushchev's reforms, Soviet hard-liners in the Communist Party force him to resign. He is replaced as Party chief by Leonid Brezhnev.

1968 In January, Novotny is ousted as the leader of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Reformer Alexander Dubcek is named as new Party head.

Under Dubcek, radical reforms are instituted during a period known as the "Prague Spring." Leaders declare that they are following a policy of "socialism with a human face." A flowering of the arts attracts worldwide attention to artists, such as playwright Vaclav Havel.

In August, the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries invade with 650,000 troops. Czechoslovak leaders, including Dubcek, are abducted by the Soviets. Massive anti-Soviet demonstrations ensue. After seven days, Dubcek and other leaders sign an agreement with the Soviets which "authorizes" the invasion, and they are returned to their country.

In response to the events in Czechoslovakia, the Soviets announce the "Brezhnev Doctrine", a pledge that the U.S.S.R. will never allow a Soviet bloc country to retreat from communism.

1969 Anti-Soviet demonstrations continue sporadically. One student, Jan Palach, dies after setting himself on fire in protest. In April, Dubcek is replaced by Gustav Husak and orthodox, Soviet-style rule is reestablished. Over 800,000 people are removed from their jobs; many are imprisoned.

1977 On January 1, about 500 Czechoslovaks sign Charter 77, demanding that the Communist government adhere to the human rights provisions set forth in the state constitution and in the Helsinki Final Act; Vaclav Havel is one of the primary spokesmen. A companion organization, VONS (The Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted), is also established to provide legal and financial assistance to political prisoners. The leaders of these groups are subjected to harassment and imprisonment.

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1978-9 Scores of dissidents, including Vaclav Havel and two other Charter '77 leaders, are arrested. Havel is sentenced to 4 and a half years, his longest term in jail. He is released in 1983.

1985 Mikhail Gorbachev becomes General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party.

1987 In Czechoslovakia, a petition listing 31 demands for the free functioning of the Catholic Church is circulated and gains over 400,000 signatories, not all of them Catholic.

In December, several thousand Czechoslovaks demonstrate on International Human Rights Day, the first protest gathering since 1969.

1988 The Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia formally accepts a presentation of "The 31 Demands." On August 21, the 20th anniversary of the Soviet invasion, as many as 10,000 people demonstrate for democracy.

1989 In January, thousands of Czechoslovaks demonstrate for human rights on the 20th anniversary of Jan Palach's self-immolation.

In February, Havel is sentenced to nine months in prison for "disturbing the public order." Western nations denounce the trial.

One thousand young people stage a May Day protest in Prague. On May 17, Havel is paroled six months early.

On the 21st anniversary of the Soviet invasion, 3,000 rally for reform in Prague; 370 are arrested.

On October 28, a protest of 10,000 is broken up by the authorities.

On November 17, police brutalize a group of student protesters in Prague. On the 19th, opposition groups respond by uniting under an umbrella organization, Civic Forum. From November 20-23, up to 250,000 march in Prague to demand the ouster of the Communist Party and free elections. On the 24th, Communist Party Leader Milos Jakes quits. The Secretariat and the Politburo also resign. Alexander Dubcek and Vaclav Havel are cheered at a rally of 300,000. On the 25th, 500,000 rally in Prague. Two days later, a general strike against Communist rule paralyzes the nation. By the end of the month, the Parliament announces the end of the leading role of the Communist Party; non-Communists are invited to join the Parliament.

On December 3, Communist leaders name 16 Communists and five non-Communists to a new Cabinet. The next day, 150,000 rally to protest the new government. On the 10th, President Gustav Husak quits after swearing in the nation's first non-Communist-dominated government in 41 years. On the 28th, the Parliament unanimously picks Alexander Dubcek as its new chairman. On the 29th, Vaclav Havel is elected president by the Parliament. He takes an oath from which all references to socialism have been dropped.

Free elections are planned for June of 1990.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA UPDATE

Government: Parliamentary democracy.

Timeline

1990

In February, the first units of the Soviet's 73,500-man military force (stationed in Czechoslovakia since 1968) begin their withdrawal. Under an agreement signed by Presidents Havel and Gorbachev, all Soviet troops must leave by July 1, 1991.

On June 8-9, the first fully free national elections since 1946 are held. The Civic Forum and its Slovak counterpart, Public Against Violence, both win pluralities and form a new government.

1991

A controversial economic plan, designed by Finance Minister Vaclav Klaus, begins to take effect. Under the plan, price controls and government subsidies will end and a three-phase privatization program will be instituted, whereby restaurants, shops and other service industries will be sold to the public, three-quarters of state-owned heavy industries will be sold, and ownership of the remaining companies will be distributed to the public through common stock vouchers. Individuals whose property was confiscated in 1948 will have the right to reclaim it.

On February 25, the leaders of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania and the Soviet Union sign a formal protocol dissolving the Warsaw Pact.

I.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMUNIST STATE

Following World War I, the victorious Allies agreed to allow the independent state of Czechoslovakia to be formed from a portion of the defeated Austro-Hungarian Empire. Tomas G. Masaryk, the father of the country, established a democratic government which lasted for 20 years. In 1939, the country was invaded by Nazi Germany. Between 1945 and 1948, Czechoslovakia regained its independence, but the Communist Party, with 38% support in elections, set out to subvert democratic institutions, and staged a coup in February 1948.

These three passages, covering the years from 1948 to 1952, describe the Communist Party's efforts to solidify power. The first excerpt, by well-known investigative reporter Claire Sterling, tells of the 1948 death of Tomas Masaryk's son, Jan, which has haunted the nation ever since. The second is a passage from a novel by Milan Kundera, one of Czechoslovakia's best known writers, who has been living in exile in France since 1975. Both the excerpt from Kundera and the last passage, by Harry Schwartz, who was *The New York Times* specialist on communist affairs, describe a period of extreme repression, when, following the lead of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, brutality, show trials and public executions were used to terrorize and pacify the populace.

Jan Masaryk, Foreign Minister of what had just become the Communist government of Czechoslovakia, fell from a window of Czernin Palace in Prague in the early hours of March 10, 1948. He was mourned for himself and what died with him: liberty in his country and civilized communion between the world's Communist and capitalist societies. Both were going before he went, but people weren't used to such things then and couldn't quite take them in until the shock of his death.

They knew nothing about his death except for the stark fact of it.

He was found at sunrise, spread-eagled in the palace courtyard, barefoot and half-naked, dirty, his face contorted in fright. He appeared to have fallen on his feet; grotesque stumps of bone were thrust outward at the heels and strewn over the cobblestones. Some tidy, inconsequent soul had scooped the splintered bones into a neat little mound. Nobody was sure how long he'd been lying there.

[Although the Communist authorities reported his death as a suicide, many people did not believe them. Why? Would he really have chosen this method?] Twenty years went by before his countrymen dared to ask such questions aloud, and dozens died, disappeared, or were held in solitary confinement because they knew, or thought they knew, the answers. However he died, he had to be forgotten. He wasn't yet in his grave before a vastly intricate machinery was already in motion to wipe out every trace....

He wasn't just any man, of course: he was Tomas Garrigue Masaryk's son. In his country, you could scarcely get closer to God than that. Czechoslovakia might never have existed as a modern state if it were not for Tomas Masaryk.... An ascetic intellectual with a genius for diplomacy and a will of steel, he had talked the skeptical Allied powers into giving fourteen million Czechs and Slovaks their independence in 1918.... The democratic republic he headed from then until his death, in 1937, was an island of sanity in a disorderly continent. Nowhere in Europe was there a nation so free, enlightened, prosperous. The Czechoslovaks idolized him, and loved his son.

THE MASARYK CASE
A HISTORY BY CLAIRE STERLING

In February 1948, Communist leader Klement Gottwald stepped out on the balcony of a Baroque palace in Prague to address the hundreds of thousands of his fellow citizens packed into Old Town Square. It was a crucial moment in Czech history, a fateful moment of the kind that occurs once or twice in a millennium.

Gottwald was flanked by his comrades, with Clementis standing next to him. There were snow flurries, it was cold, and Gottwald was bareheaded. The solicitous Clementis took off his own fur cap and set it on Gottwald's head.

The Party propaganda section put out hundreds of thousands of copies of a photograph of that balcony with Gottwald, a fur cap on his head and comrades at his side, speaking to the nation. On that balcony the history of Communist Czechoslovakia was born. Every child knew the photograph from posters, schoolbooks and museums.

Four years later Clementis was charged with treason and hanged. The propaganda section immediately airbrushed him out of history and, obviously, out of all the photographs as well. Ever since, Gottwald has stood on that balcony alone. Where Clementis once stood, there is only bare palace wall. All that remains of Clementis is the cap on Gottwald's head.

THE BOOK OF LAUGHTER AND FORGETTING
A NOVEL BY MILAN KUNDERA

In November, 1952, fourteen former high ranking Czech officials were placed on trial. All the accused pleaded guilty and confessed at length.... While the trial was underway, meetings were orchestrated all over Czechoslovakia. In factories, schools, and elsewhere, demands for the death penalty were made. Predictably, those demands were granted. [Eleven of the defendants, including former Foreign Minister Vladimir Clementis, were sentenced to death, and were hanged on the morning of December 3. The other three accused men were sentenced to life imprisonment. These included former Foreign Trade Minister Eugen Loebl.]

Sixteen years later, in mid-1968, Loebl described how his confession had been obtained:

> *I had to stand during the examinations and I was not allowed to sit down in the cell. The interrogations lasted [an] average of sixteen hours a day; there was an interval of two hours [when I was allowed to sleep]. Every ten minutes the warder pounded on the door, and I had to jump to attention and report. "Detainee number fourteen seventy three reports: strength one detainee, everything in order." Naturally, the first two or three nights I could not fall asleep again after the first awakening. Later I was so tired that as soon as I lay down after making the report I fell asleep. I was awakened thirty or forty times every night. Sometimes when the loud bangs on the door did not wake me, the warder came into the cell and kicked me. Another instrument was hunger.... After two or three weeks my feet were swollen; every inch of my body ached at the slightest touch .... The interrogation—three officials alternated—was a never-ending stream of abuse, humiliation, and threats.*

Nothing was publicly known then of this and other bestialities that produced the "confessions." On the contrary, at that time, to have participated in the arrangements for this purge was considered a mark of great political merit....

The trials of 1952-54 were merely the visible tips of the Stalinist icebergs that chilled and terrorized Czechoslovakia in the years after the 1948 Communist take over. Tens of thousands of obscure figures were sent to jail for real or imagined political opposition. All opposition parties were destroyed and replaced by a group of puppet parties, retained to give the illusion that the Communists did not have a monopoly of all power. Czechoslovakia's economic and cultural ties with the West were severed, and the Iron Curtain descended. Schools, newspapers, theaters, films, radio, and television were turned into propaganda media on the Soviet model. Libraries were purged, and millions of books with dangerous "bourgeois" ideas were converted into pulp. A network of secret police informers, covering every street and every apartment house, kept the populace under constant, vigilant surveillance. Czechoslovakia was the last of the Eastern European countries to fall under Communist rule, but its masters sought to make up for lost time by the thoroughness, speed and fidelity with which they reproduced Stalin's Soviet patterns.

PRAGUE'S 200 DAYS
A HISTORY BY HARRY SCHWARTZ

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

1. Why was Jan Masaryk's death significant? What kind of government had his father established in 1918?

2. What is Milan Kundera trying to say about the Communist government's attitude toward history? toward truth?

3. What were the tactics used by the Communist Czechoslovak government to secure power after the 1948 coup? Use examples.

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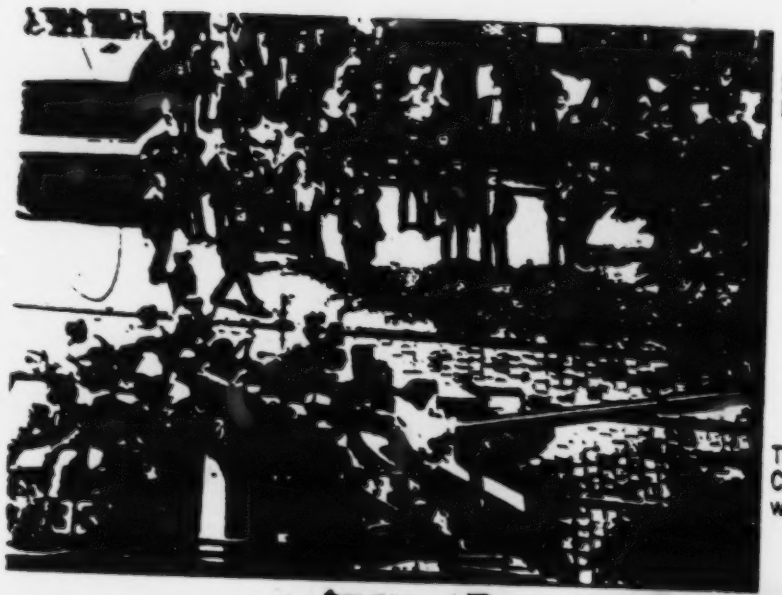
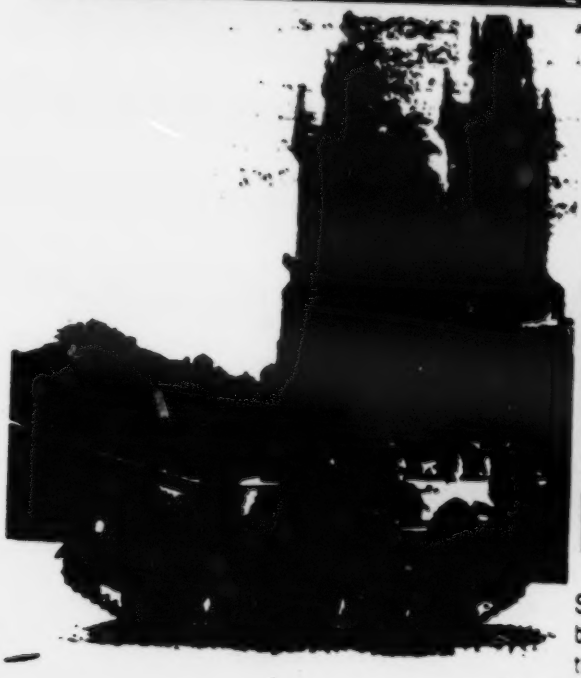


Soviet tanks roll through the streets of Prague in August of 1968.

The youth of 1968 march with a Czechoslovak flag, bloodied in confrontation with Soviet troops.



Soviet tank in light snow, Prague 1968. By an agreement reached between the new, non-communist Czechoslovak government and the U.S.S.R. in February 1990, Soviet forces, omnipresent since the '68 invasion, will leave the country by July 1991.

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Photos by Jaroslav Svestka, from the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe

II.

REFORM AND REACTION

Following the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953, Nikita Khrushchev emerged from the ensuing power struggle as General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party. In 1956, at the 20th Party Congress, Khrushchev denounced Stalin's campaign of terror and the personality cult which he had built around him. Khrushchev's policies of "de-Stalinization" propelled several Soviet bloc countries to seek greater freedom. That same year, however, the limits of reform were demonstrated when Soviet troops were used to crush a popular independence revolt in Hungary. Even so, Khrushchev's policies eventually contributed to his ouster in 1964, when he was replaced by Leonid Brezhnev. In Czechoslovakia, the policies of de-Stalinization, in conjunction with internal political and economic factors, led to a period of dramatic reform in 1968 known as the "Prague Spring." It was short-lived. In the first hours of August 21, 1968, the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries invaded with over a half a million troops. Czechoslovak leaders were arrested, taken to Moscow, forced to sign an agreement "authorizing" the invasion, and were returned seven days later, powerless and acquiescent. The country entered another phase of repression that lasted until the democratic revolution of 1989.

These five passages cover the years from 1953 to 1969. The first, from *The New York Times'* Harry Schwartz, describes the conditions leading up to 1968. The second, "2,000 Words," was published in Czechoslovakia in June 1968, and became a rallying cry for accelerated reform. It received a mild rebuke from the Czechoslovak Communist Party, but was denounced by the Soviets as a counterrevolutionary platform designed to tear Czechoslovakia from the community of communist nations. An excerpt from *Collier's Encyclopedia* tells of the invasion, and a passage from the exiled Czech novelist Milan Kundera describes the aftermath.

Antonin Novotny was a poorly educated former mechanic who... [it has been suggested] was rewarded for his services in helping fabricate the judicial lynching of... Clementis and his codefendants [by promotion to high rank within the Communist Party].... When Gottwald died unexpectedly early in 1953, Novotny became boss of the Party bureaucracy and, therefore, of the entire country....

Novotny was one of the most vulnerable of the Eastern European rulers before the onslaught of those who wanted radical changes. And, in Czechoslovakia, it soon became clear that there were many with such desires.

One reason for change was the deteriorating economic situation in 1962 and 1963.... The penalty was being paid for mistakes made over many years of centralized, Soviet-style economic planning, a reckoning hastened by unusually bad weather and other chance factors.... There was also the pressure from increasing contact with the West, its ideas and its wealth. By the early 1960s, Czechoslovakia, following the Soviet example, was annually admitting tens of thousands of Western tourists and letting thousands of Czechs and Slovaks visit Western Europe. With the increasing exchange of people came increasing demand for access to Western books, magazines, newspapers and ideas. The regime began to retreat, slowly but surely....

By early 1967, British drama critic Kenneth Tynan hailed Prague as "the theatre capital of Europe." Dramatist Vaclav Havel and film directors Jiri Menzel, Milos Forman and Jan Nemec suddenly became figures of world importance in their professions.... Indicative of how much ideological censorship was eased in 1963 and years immediately following was the fact that Vaclav Havel's two major plays, *The Garden Party* and *The Memorandum*, were produced and performed before appreciative Prague audiences. Both were examples of theater of the absurd, but no censor could have been so obtuse as to miss the fact that barbed satirical shafts were aimed at targets within Czechoslovakia.

PRAGUE'S 200 DAYS
A HISTORY BY HARRY SCHWARTZ

The Communist Party, which after [World War II] possessed the great trust of the people, gradually exchanged this trust for offices, until it had all the offices and nothing else. We must put it this way; those Communists among us know it to be so, and their disappointment over the results is as great as the disappointment of the others. The leadership's incorrect line turned the Party from a political party and ideological alliance into a power organization which became very attractive to egoists avid for rule, calculating cowards, and people with bad consciences....

From the beginning of the current year, we have been taking part in a revival process of democratization.... The revival process is not contributing any very new things. It is producing ideas and suggestions many of which are older than our socialism and others of which emerged under the surface of visible events. They should have been expressed long ago; however they were suppressed....

Therefore, let us not overestimate the significance of criticism from the ranks of writers and students. The source of social change is the economy. The right word carries significance only if it is spoken under conditions which have been duly prepared. By duly prepared conditions in our country, unfortunately, we must understand our general poverty and the complete disintegration of the old system of rule, in which politicians of a certain type calmly and peacefully compromised themselves at our expense. Thus, truth is not victorious; truth simply remains when everything else goes to pot! There is no cause for national celebration of victory, there is merely cause for new hope....

Each of us will have to be responsible for drawing his own conclusions. Commonly agreed-upon conclusions can only be reached by discussion, and this requires freedom of expression which actually is our only democratic achievement of the current year....

We turn to you in this moment of hope, which however is still threatened. It took several months for many of us to believe that we could speak out, and many still do not yet believe it. Nevertheless, we have spoken out, and such a great number of things have been revealed, that somehow we must complete our aim of humanizing this regime. Otherwise, the revenge of the old forces will be cruel....

"2,000 WORDS TO WORKERS, FARMERS, SCIENTISTS, ARTISTS AND EVERYONE"
BY LUDVIK VACULIK, COSIGNED BY 67 OTHER PROMINENT CITIZENS, JUNE 27, 1968

In January [1968], President Novotny was ousted as party leader.... Alexander Dubcek, first secretary of the Slovak Communist Party and a critic of the Novotny government, became the new party leader and principal political figure. A distinctly democratic trend developed. Freedom of expression, to a degree unprecedented in a Communist state, appeared throughout all levels of society. Czechoslovakia's new leaders referring to their "Socialism with a human face," announced plans for further liberalization of the economy and for a new constitution guaranteeing the rights of minority groups.

The Czechoslovak reforms, especially the abolition of press censorship, were sharply criticized in the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and East Germany. Warsaw Pact maneuvers began in Czechoslovakia in June, and Soviet troops lingered after these maneuvers were completed.... Suddenly, in the late evening and early morning hours of Aug. 20-21, 1968, a large Soviet force and token East German, Hungarian, Polish and Bulgarian forces, totaling 650,000, invaded and occupied Czechoslovakia and abducted the leading liberal officials, including Dubcek....

COLLIER'S ENCYCLOPEDIA, 1980

The representatives of the country had been hauled away like criminals by the Russian army, no one knew where they were, everyone feared for the men's lives, and hatred for the Russians drugged people like alcohol. It was a drunken carnival of hate, Czech towns were decorated with thousands of hand-painted posters bearing ironic texts, epigrams, poems, and cartoons of Brezhnev and his soldiers, jeered at by one and all as a circus of illiterates. But no carnival can go on forever. In the meantime, the Russians had forced the Czech representatives to sign a compromise agreement with Moscow. When Dubcek returned with them to Prague, he gave a speech over the radio. He was so devastated after his six-day detention he could hardly talk; he kept stuttering and gasping for breath, making loud pauses between sentences, pauses lasting nearly thirty seconds.

The compromise saved the country from the worst: the executions and mass deportations that had terrified everyone. But one thing was clear: the country would have to bow to the conqueror. For ever and ever, it will stutter, stammer, gasp for air like Alexander Dubcek. The carnival was over. Workday humiliation had begun.

THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING
A NOVEL BY MILAN KUNDERA

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

1. According to Harry Schwartz, what were the forces that led to reform during the 1960s? What were the signs of reform that were most visible to the rest of the world? Why was Vaclav Havel known in the West?

2. According to the "2,000 Words," what was the main source for social change? What is the aim of the signers?

3. What was the reform that was most sharply criticized by the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries? Using Kundera's comments on Gottwald and Clementis, explain why this reform would be most troublesome to other countries in the Soviet bloc.

4. What was the aftermath of the Soviet invasion? How did the Czech people express their feelings? What was their fear of what would follow?

III.

VOICES

The loosening of controls on free expression during the 1960s resulted in a flowering of the arts in Czechoslovakia. Following the 1968 Soviet invasion, the country entered a period known as "normalization" where strict Communist Party control was again exercised over all aspects of society. For the average Czechoslovak citizen, however, life was far from normal. Because of their skill in depicting their countrymen's hopes, aspirations, fears and frustrations, silencing Czechoslovakia's artists became a priority for the Party apparatus. Many, like novelists Milan Kundera, Joseph Skvorecky and world-renowned film director Milos Forman, were forced into exile. Others, like Ludvik Vaculik and Vaclav Havel, the most famous Czech playwright, stayed and became the symbols of dissent, their writing circulated in the *samizdat* underground. Though they were harassed and imprisoned, they continued to give voice to their nation's hidden life.

The following four passages, roughly covering the period from 1968 to 1977, are from Havel, Kundera, Skvorecky and Vaculik.

The first half of the 1970s here in Czechoslovakia lives in my memory as a period of darkness. The gradual process of growing self-awareness and liberation of our society in the preceding decade and the great social upsurge of 1968 was followed by long years of frustration, depression, resignation and apathy ... a consequence of the Soviet intervention and so-called "normalization." Not that life had come to a standstill—naturally, much that is important kept on happening; nevertheless, our society as a whole was atomized....

A CUP OF COFFEE WITH MY INTERROGATOR

AN INTRODUCTION BY VACLAV HAVEL

It is 1971, and Mirek says that the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting.

That is his attempt to justify what his friends call carelessness: keeping a careful diary, preserving all correspondence, taking notes at meetings where there is discussion of the current situation and debate of where to go from here. Nothing we do is in violation of the constitution he tells them. Trying to hide, feeling guilty —that's the beginning of the end.

A week ago, while working with a crew on the roof of a new building, he looked down and had a sudden dizzy spell. He lost his balance and grabbed at a poorly fastened beam, but it came loose and he had to be pulled out from under it. At first the injury looked serious, but later, when he learned it was just a run-of-the-mill broken arm, he said to himself with satisfaction that now he'd get a week or two off and have time for some things he'd been meaning to take care of.

He had finally come around to the position of his more cautious friends. True, the constitution guaranteed freedom of speech; but the law punished any act that could be construed as undermining the state. Who could tell when the state would start screaming that this or that word was undermining it? He decided he'd better put the incriminating papers in a safe place after all.

THE BOOK OF LAUGHTER AND FORGETTING

A NOVEL BY MILAN KUNDERA

Her overcoat, made of artificial leather patches and long enough to reach the ground, is flying out behind her, a wide-brimmed turquoise hat balances precariously on her head and from beneath it glossy chestnut hair, the envy of many a woman, falls straight to her shoulders. But Dotty has dyed the fringes of her hair violet, and it looks as though a poorly fastened purple halo has slipped down around her neck. The final effect of all this is to make her look like a scatterbrained hooker. But Dotty is not that at all. During the day she labours industriously as a teller (or a "telleress," as she says) in the Royal Bank of Canada..., soberly dressed in the costume of her profession. It is only in the evening that she compensates extravagantly for what Communism denied her in the past.

The fact that Dotty managed to leave Czechoslovakia legally shows how unjustified her nickname really is. In the summer of 1968, when hippies and marijuanos from all over the world were flocking to Prague, she roped in a chump from Saskatchewan and thus liberated herself from the dictatorship of the proletariat. She stayed with him until they got to Toronto, where his money ran out. But it was far enough for Dotty....

She had never got beyond public school in Czechoslovakia, so renouncing her citizenship cost her no more than a few hundred dollars. The instant she became legally a Canadian she flew back to Prague and she went straight to Wenceslas Square dressed in creations that came partly from the Salvation Army store, partly from Honest Ed's proletarian bargain emporium, so that all her old cronies could see and admire her. The high point of this demonstration of freedom in a police state came, by her account, when some poor cop on the beat stopped her and said, in probably one of the few complete sentences he knew, "What do you think this is, comrade, a fancy dress ball?" That was as far as he got, for Dotty's fluent English froze any remaining words on his tongue.

THE ENGINEER OF HUMAN SOULS

A NOVEL BY JOSEF SKVORECKY

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Unless you have been through it yourself, you wouldn't believe how difficult it is to avoid replying to polite questioning. Not only does it go against the grain not to reply, because of one's good upbringing, but it is also difficult to keep up because it is hard on the ears. A beginner finds it next to impossible. Worst of all, it doesn't make for good relations between the parties concerned, the rift thus created being often insurmountable....

Undeterred by his lack of success, Lieut.-Colonel Noga began anew each morning: "Would you please get your papers ready, Blanicka." His secretary, Blanka, took out a clean sheet of paper, carbons and flimsies, put them in her typewriter and, fingers poised about the keyboard turned her face toward her boss. He hesitated while he thought out is question, then he asked me, "Would you care for a cup of coffee?" I decided to accept the coffee.

..."All right, Mr. Vaculik, you insist that your conduct isn't a breach of the law. Let's just suppose you're right," he was fond of saying. Then he would add, "well then, why don't you tell me about it."

"I'm sorry, Lieut.-Colonel," I would reply, "but I really don't want to go over all that again."

"You don't feel you want to? What kind of talk is that? Why don't you say exactly what you mean—after all this is your protocol: 'I refuse to testify!'"

Mrs. Blanka looked up at me, I nodded shamefacedly, and she typed the words.

"When will you return my things to me?" I asked, pointing at the two suitcases standing beside his desk.

"Don't confuse the issue. Next question—take this down, Blanicka: What is your opinion... of the way the Western press... is misusing the whole affair... for its slanderous campaign against Czechoslovakia?"

I dictated my reply: "I will answer this question as soon as I have had the opportunity to read what the Western press has to say on the subject."

A CUP OF COFFEE WITH MY INTERROGATOR
A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS BY LUDVIK VACULIK

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

1. Use the vocabulary to explain what "normalization" meant. What did it mean to Vaclav Havel?
2. What does it mean to say that "the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting?" How does this relate to the Communist Party's manipulation of history and control of the press? Does it explain why Havel put quotes around the word "normalization"?
3. How does Mirek cope with "normalization"? How does Dotty? Dotty leaves the country to "liberate" herself from "the dictatorship of the proletariat." What class does she belong to? What do Dotty's extravagant clothes imply about life and material wealth in Czechoslovakia?
4. Why was Lieutenant Colonel Noga's method of interrogation effective? Compare Vaculik's interrogation with Loebel's. How did "normalization" compare with Stalinization?

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IV.

DOCUMENTS OF DISSENT

In the years following the 1968 Soviet invasion, few people had the stamina or moral strength to openly oppose the Communist regime. Those who did were followed, harassed, imprisoned and isolated; they were fired from their jobs and had to live with the knowledge that their children would be penalized for their persistence. Despite these pressures, a number of individuals continued to speak. Slowly, during the 1970s, essays, banned literature and uncensored news reports began to circulate underground, unseen by the outside world. That changed on January 1, 1977 with the Declaration of Charter 77, a loose coalition of approximately 500 ex-communists, laborers, intellectuals, church activists and writers who issued a public demand for human rights in their country. The most prominent among them was dissident playwright Vaclav Havel, who later became their principal spokesman.

The following passages are from some of the documents of the dissident movement: the Charter 77 Declaration; a 1987 petition listing 31 demands for the free functioning of the Catholic Church, which had gained over 400,000 signatories when it was formally accepted by Cardinal Tomasek of Czechoslovakia in 1988; an article which originally appeared in the *samizdat* journal *Lidove noviny*, by a participant in an August 21, 1988 Prague demonstration on the 20th anniversary of the Soviet invasion; and a November 19, 1989 statement by Civic Forum, an umbrella organization for opposition groups, formed in response to police violence against student protesters two days before.

Tens of thousands of our citizens are prevented from working in their own fields for the sole reason that they hold views differing from official ones, and are discriminated against and harassed in all kinds of ways by the authorities and the public organizations. Deprived as they are of any means to defend themselves, they become victims of a virtual apartheid.

Hundreds of thousands of other citizens are denied that 'freedom from fear' mentioned in the preamble of the first covenant [of the Helsinki Final Act], being condemned to live in constant danger of unemployment and other penalties if they voice their own opinions....

Countless young people are prevented from studying because of their own views or even their parents'. Innumerable citizens live in fear that their own and their children's right to education may be withdrawn if they should ever speak up in accordance with their convictions. Any exercise of the right to 'seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print' or 'in the form of art', is punished by extrajudicial or even judicial sanctions, often in the form of criminal charges as in the recent trial of young musicians....

Charter 77 is a free, informal, open community of people of different convictions, different faiths and different professions united by the will to strive, individually and collectively, for the respect of civic and human rights in our own country and throughout the world—rights accorded to all men by... international [human rights] covenants, by the Final Act of the Helsinki conference and by numerous other international documents opposing war, violence and social or spiritual oppression, and which are comprehensively laid down in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights....

... We hereby authorize Professor Dr. Jan Patocka, Vaclav Havel and Professor Jiri Hajek to act as spokesmen for the Charter.

THE DECLARATION OF CHARTER 77
JANUARY 1, 1977

1. Our fundamental demand is the separation of Church and state, from which would follow that the state would not involve itself in the organization and activity of the Church. The majority of other suggestions stem from this fundamental demand....

2. Let the nomination of new bishops become the internal affair of the Church, with which the state should not interfere.

3. We demand that the state cease interfering in the nomination of parish priests and leave all organizational matters to the Church hierarchy.

4. We demand that the state not interfere with the admission of students to the theological facilities, nor determine enrollment also, that they not interfere in the selection of instructors....

9. We demand that religious instruction take place outside state schools, on Church property, thereby transferring it to the Church's sphere of influence. Children's application for religious instruction should be given to the parish office, and the extent of instruction, as well as the placement of children, should be the duty of the local ordained minister in consultation with his spiritual guide....

16. We demand that the copying and distribution of religious texts be regarded as lawful activity and not as a criminal act or misdemeanor....

19. We demand that the government cease jamming Czech and Slovak broadcasts of Radio Vatican as well as Sunday mass on Radio Free Europe....

THE THIRTY-ONE DEMANDS
1987

Pulled along by the crowd, exhilarated by the crowd, seized by the crowd, I chanted slogans, applauded, waved and sang the national anthem and Masaryk's "My Son, Dear Son" repeatedly. Only around 10 p.m., after they had scattered us with the help of their dogs and nightsticks, and after I had managed, barefoot, sweaty and hoarse, to duck into the subway, only then was I able to reflect upon whether these few hours of truth would be able to sway the rusty indicator on the jammed scale of national hope.

...Again and again, I see in my mind the events of that day unfolding like scenes from a documentary film —a film entitled, perhaps, "FEAR NO MORE!" As we chanted this slogan in Kaprova Street, some of the residents of the surrounding houses closed their curtains, others opened their windows wide and waved, and still others ran outdoors and joined the procession. "Where are you going?" they asked. "To the Castle!" we answered, as if it were self-evident, because where else does one go with petitions, lists of demands, and proposals? A string of plainclothes and uniformed "guardians of security," however, blocked the bridge.... An old woman beside me began to cry. "These twenty years have been enough. Enough already! Enough already!" she mumbled into her handkerchief. As the shouts of "Constitution! Liberty! Democracy!" began, I was convinced that at least some of the motionless bullies must be experiencing an unaccustomed sensation, a suspicion that something was fundamentally not right. They could not, however, be expected to yield to their feelings....

The dogs had thick, short fur and were unmuzzled. And then there was only the movement of nightsticks, people running away, falling being arrested, and the sound of emergency vehicles turning on their sirens.

As I recall that scene again and again, I realize that it was... only an overture to a more important, but as yet unwritten drama. In competition for the leading role were, of course, the youth who carried the day – that is young people who know the events of 1968 only from reminiscences of witnesses. Of these witnesses, only the oldest seem to have come....

Twenty years is a very long time in a human life, and you—who tuned in the Voice of America on Monday evening to hear indirectly what happened underneath the windows of your Prague apartments... —perhaps you have the right to resignation, fear, and lack of faith. ...[But] your words, grounded in experience were sorely missed. We know, of course, that even truth, clad only in words, will achieve but little against a lie supported by force of arms, but that does not mean that the duty to proclaim the truth falls by the wayside. At one time you, too, knew this.

"FEAR NO MORE," UNCAPTIVE MINDS NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1988
AN ARTICLE BY LENKA PROCHAZKOVA

Our country has found itself in a deep moral, spiritual, ecological, social, economic, and political crisis. This crisis is a testimony to the ineffectiveness of the hitherto existing political and economic system....

The Civic Forum therefore aims at achieving the following program objectives:

1. **The Law:** The Czechoslovak republic must be a law-based democratic state in the traditions of Czechoslovak statehood and of internationally accepted principles, expressed above all in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Conventions on Civic and Political Rights. In this spirit, a new constitution must be worked out which will especially make more precise relations between citizen and state. Such a constitution can be adopted only by a newly elected legislative assembly.

2. **Political System:** We demand fundamental, consistent and lasting changes in the political system of our society.... All existing and newly founded political and social associations will have an equal opportunity to participate in free elections for all levels of government. This assumes, however, that the Communist Party abandons its constitutionally guaranteed leading role in our society....

4. **National Economy:** We have to abandon our long-standing methods of running the economy.... We are convinced that this economic system cannot be improved by minor modifications.

We want to create a developed market, not deformed by bureaucratic interventions. Its successful functioning demands the demolition of the monopoly position of existing large enterprises and the establishment of genuine competition. This can be created solely on the basis of different types of ownership coexisting parallel on an equal footing....

7. **Culture:** Culture... must free itself from all restrictive ideologies and overcome the existing artificial separation of our culture.... A democratic education system must be organized on principles of humanity, without a state monopoly of education....

CIVIC FORUM'S 'WHAT DO WE WANT'
NOVEMBER 19, 1989

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

1. According to Charter 77, what rights were being denied to Czech citizens? What is Charter 77's purpose?
2. What kind of control did the state have over the Catholic Church? How was it exercised?
3. What segment of society played the most important role in the August 21, 1988 demonstration? The writer says that truth will "achieve but little against a lie supported by the force of arms." What does he mean? Do you think he is right?
4. What does Civic Forum want? What tradition do they say they are basing their demands upon?

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V.

ON CHANGE

Throughout 1989, the world watched in awe as the people of Eastern Europe took to the streets demanding freedom and democracy. With Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's sensitivity to world opinion and refusal to use military intervention against popular mass movements in Europe, a window of opportunity had opened. Although the Czechoslovak dissident movement had been slowly gaining strength for years, the turning point came when, on the night of November 17, 1989, riot police bludgeoned and beat a peaceful demonstration of unarmed students. The violence, which police later testified, was approved by Communist Party boss Milos Jakes, was a fateful error by the country's rulers. The nation responded with defiant peacefulness. In a month of marching and singing, organizing and strikes, hundreds of thousands of Czechoslovak people succeeded in removing the Communist Party from power.

The following five passages deal with the internal forces that made change possible, and touch on the strengths and weaknesses of Czechoslovak society which will impel and impede the process of democratization.

The following is excerpted from an essay by Vaclav Havel.

As far as the hustle and the bustle amid the mighty is concerned, our prospects up to now do not appear too promising. While Gorbachev is certainly a more enlightened ruler than his predecessors, and Jakes is doing his best to verbally imitate Gorbachev, talking about would-be restructuring and democratization for his country as well, these two men have, in fact, changed our lives very little...

The most important development is the chasm which is slowly but relentlessly widening between two worlds which today no longer seem to have anything in common: the world of official ideology and the real world of thinking and feeling. Of course, everyone continues to do what must be done—people vote, show fear of their superiors, follow their orders, and at various levels of the hierarchy they carry out the will of the central authority—but actually, nobody any longer believes the things that the powerful say. People just mind their own business and live their lives as best they can. The real interests of society—ranging from the hunger for Western electronic equipment to the pursuit of the latest *samizdat* literatures, from the cultivation of sophisticated hobbies defiantly developed against many obstacles, to the acquiescence to various subcultures (be they musical, religious, or pertaining to some entirely different activity); from the mass watching of Western TV, to the free expression of opinions in the cheapest beer ha[illegible]—all these together constitute a vast reservoir of independent expression entirely outside the framework created by the powers-that-be. We may even go so far as to say that the real and most important parallel *polis* is now represented not by the "dissident world," but by the world of ideas and the private interests of all society, which on the one hand is giving the totalitarian authorities what they unconditionally demand, but on the other hand openly pursues whatever it craves, which of course usually has very little to do with the will of the authorities.

UNCAPTIVE MINDS,
JUNE-AUGUST 1988

The following is an excerpt from an address given by Milos Jakes, then Secretary-General of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, to a closed meeting of regional party officials in Cerveny Hradek on July 17, 1989. The speech was secretly taped and leaked, and was broadcast several times on Radio Free Europe.

On how to deal with Vaclav Havel: As for Havel, we think it is necessary to keep more silent about him, because [the opposition and the West] have chosen him as their herald and because the more we persecute him, the greater a hero he will be.... You have to help [us demonstrate] that Havel is not only criticized by the Central committee and the government but [also] from below, from the [public in general].... I do not think that it would serve any purpose if we simply arrested Havel. In my opinion, [we should not arrest him] as long as he is not involved in any serious and obvious misdemeanors. Another question is whether we will let him [travel] abroad. [West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich] Gensher asked us to do so; we listened to him, but did not answer. Why should we get involved in quarrels about such things? After all, it's purely our business whether we allow [him to travel or not]. It is clear that we will not....

Havel is afraid that we would not allow him to return, that we would deprive him of his citizenship. The moment this happened, he would suddenly be a nobody. He is a nobody. He is only valuable as long as he is here, as long as he is involved in [opposition] activities. But we mustn't direct our hits directly against Havel, but against the others, so that [our actions] cannot be misused against us. Otherwise the cultural figures all over the world, and the democratic part of the world, will stand up in his defense.... We must deal with that matter wisely in order to avoid damaging our interests.

UNCAPTIVE MINDS,
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1989

Marie and Marek, ages 8 and 12, watched the revolution in Czechoslovakia on the TV set in their family's apartment in a high-rise on the outskirts of Prague.

"Comrade teacher says we saw it all on TV, so we don't have to talk about it in school," said Marie, as she sits in her father's lap. "We were on strike for one hour," she added.

"The teacher told us that we wouldn't have to learn Russian any more, and we were all happy," added her brother.

Marek remembers watching the demonstrations last month: "There was a demonstration and it was supposed to end, and the policeman got angry and went against them with sticks and shields and helmets and they had the helmets on.... The students were kneeling in front of them saying, 'We have empty hands,' and they beat them up."

Would he go to a demonstration? "Yes... that there shouldn't be Communists. That there should be freedom here."

In the future, said Marie, "we'll be able to travel more abroad, there will be different air to breathe, and there will be good things to buy."

And are people happier now? "That depends," said Marek. "The Russian teacher is not."

THE LOS ANGELES TIMES,
DECEMBER 17, 1989

Excerpts from President Vaclav Havel's 1990 New Year's Day address:

For forty years you have heard on this day from the mouths of my predecessors, in a number of variations, the same thing: how our country is flourishing, how many more millions of tons of steel we have produced, how we believe in our Government and what beautiful prospects are opening ahead of us. I assume you have not named me to this office so that I, too, should lie to you.

Our country is not flourishing....

Everywhere in the world, people were surprised how these malleable, humiliated, cynical citizens of Czechoslovakia, who seemingly believed in nothing, found the tremendous strength within a few weeks to cast off the totalitarian system in an entirely peaceful and dignified manner. We ourselves were surprised at it.

And we ask: Where did young people who had never known another system get their longing for truth, their love of freedom, their political imagination, their civic courage and civil responsibility? How did their parents, precisely the generation thought to have been lost, join them?...

Now it depends only on us whether this hope will be fulfilled, whether our civic, national and political self-respect will be revived. Only a man or nation with self-respect, in the best sense of the word, is capable of listening to the voices of others, while accepting them as equals, of forgiving enemies and expiating sins....

Perhaps you are asking what kind of republic I am dreaming about. I will answer you: a republic that is independent, free, democratic, a republic with economic prosperity and also social justice, a humane republic that serves man and for that reason also has the hope that man will serve it...

THE NEW YORK TIMES,
JANUARY 2, 1990

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The new editor of the Czechoslovak Communist Party daily, *Rude Pravo*, placed an article on the front page of his newspaper this week, an announcement by the Interior Ministry that the secret police would be dissolved and their domestic spying activities abolished.

Would the editor, Zdenek Porybny, assign reporters to investigate what the secret police had been doing over the last four decades, asked a visitor, alone with him in the editor's fourth-floor conference room before the working day began. He thought a moment. "First," he replied, "I'd have to find out who on my staff was a member of the secret police."

How? "I have no idea," he acknowledged. "There's really no one you can ask."

THE NEW YORK TIMES,
JANUARY 22, 1990

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

1. If Havel is correct and people only mind their own business, why was there a move toward democracy? Where does Havel feel change in Czechoslovakia could come from? Why?

2. Why does Jakes think that the Party shouldn't attack Havel openly? What is Jakes attitude toward Havel's right to free speech? to citizenship? to travel? to due process?

3. Why does Marie's teacher say she won't discuss the revolution in class? Why do you think she won't? What does Marie expect from freedom? As a student living in a democracy, do you think these expectations are realistic? Why? Why not?

4. Havel begins his New Year's presidential address by stating that he will not lie to his countrymen. Given what you now know about the Communist Party's record on truth in history, why do you think this is so important? What kind of a country does Havel say he would like Czechoslovakia to become?

5. The bureaucratic control that the Communist Party had over all segments of society will make it difficult for the editor of *Rude Pravo* to investigate the secret police. What other difficulties will democratization face?

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A fateful turning point in Czechoslovak history came on the night of November 17, 1989, when riot police brutalized a group of unarmed students protesting for democracy. Here, before the attack, students offer flowers to police.

Photo by Pavel Stecha

The reaction came swiftly as, within days, a general strike paralyzed the nation and hundreds of thousands of Czechoslovak citizens rallied against the government.

Photo by Petr Tuma

Posters on a storefront window in Prague, December 19, 1989, in support of dissident playwright Vaclav Havel, who was sworn in as president on December 30.

Photo from the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe

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THE HARD AND STUBBORN LIFE OF VACLAV HAVEL

A profile by Josef Skvorecky

For the past half-century, the Czechs and the Slovaks, who constitute the two principal peoples of Czechoslovakia, have been living under totalitarian regimes. In March 1939 the country was occupied by the German Nazis whose bloody rule lasted until May 1945. In February 1948, after less than three years of limited democracy, the Communist party staged a *coup d'etat* and changed Czechoslovakia into another variety of totalitarianism. With various ups and downs, communist domination survived until 1989 when people, stunned by the police massacre of students on November 17, took to the streets and, in a remarkably bloodless uprising, overturned the Communist regime.

The ups of those forty years of Marxist oppression were the slightly "liberalized" mid-sixties, and mainly the first nine months of 1968 when the Party boss Alexander Dubcek tried to replace the dictatorial system with what he called "socialism with a human face." The downs were the first ten years of the communist regime when about 350 people were executed for political "crimes"—among them the Socialist deputy Milada Horakova, the only woman ever killed by the Czechoslovaks for such imaginary offences. Over one hundred thousand "class enemies" were arrested and forced to work in Soviet-owned uranium mines in northwestern Bohemia under conditions of slave labour. Religious orders were banned and monks and nuns sent to "concentration cloisters." Even eleven members of the ruling party's leadership were hanged in the aftermath of the Slansky/Clementis trials of 1952.

Dubcek's attempt at preventing a repetition of all this was cut short in 1968 by the military intervention of over a half-million soldiers and 5000 assault vehicles of the the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. Czechoslovakia, totalitarian to be sure until then, but unoccupied by a foreign army, turned, to all intents and purposes, into a colony of the U.S.S.R., with strong Soviet

The post-Soviet-invasion regime, using a vast network of well-rewarded informers and an army of secret policemen, made ruthless efforts to put every single citizen under its total control. This aim– from which the characterization of such regimes as "totalitarian" (a term coined by Benito Mussolini) is derived– was almost achieved. almost, but not quite. A group of idealistic men and women, risking jail and often even life, refused to "live with the lie," and unceasingly worked for a restitution of democracy in Czechoslovakia. Without any doubt, the most prominent among these valiant individuals was the playwright and essayist Vaclav Havel.

After the victorious revolution of 1989, he logically became the country's president.

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His life was marked by the system that divides people— *de jure*, not just *de facto*—into first, second and third class citizens. The division is common for all the totalitarian regimes that have cursed our century. In both communist and fascist/nazi countries, the members of the ruling party are the privileged, first-class citizens. They hold practically all leading posts in politics, in the army and the police, in industry, in schools and in public organizations. All those who do not belong to the ruling party but who unconditionally accept its "leading role," i.e., its unlimited power, who go unquestioningly about their daily chores, and who never protest against the establishment's crimes and injustices, are second-class citizens. By their obedience, they avoid the worst of living under undemocratic systems, such as arbitrary jail, no chance of social mobility, and discrimination against their children when they apply to institutions of higher learning. They can live in relative peace.

Third class citizens, more or less constantly harassed by the police, often serving long terms in jail for "political offenses," and sometimes even expiring on the gallows

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this group the Nazi regime, which based its ideology on race discrimination, added the Jews and the Gypsies, who they condemned to total physical extermination.

The Communist regime, practicing "class" discrimination, included in this third-class category persons of "bourgeois and capitalist origin" who—unless they managed to join the party and were willing to support its policies—were excluded from white-collar professions, and whose children were not admitted to higher education.

Vaclav Havel, christened after Prince Vaclav, the "Good King Wenceslaus" of the old British carol, was born in 1936 into a family of Czech capitalists. Therefore, after 1948, he was treated as a third-class citizen.

Havel's grandfather was a successful Prague architect who built some of the handsomest end-of-the-century apartment houses along the Moldau River embankment, opposite the Hradcany castle, the traditional seat of Czech kings and presidents. He also erected the legendary Lucerna Palace, a sort of Carnegie Hall of Czechoslovakia, that houses Prague's most famous nightclub, a huge concert-and-dance hall, the site of events that punctuated the fortunes of the capital city throughout the twentieth century. Patriotic anti-Austrian galas were held there before World War I, and after it, the first jazz concerts. Swingbands of the forties made non-Aryan noise to spite the Nazis under its gilded ceiling, and rock'n'roll was reintroduced here after the post-1968 ban, to spite the Communists. To this mythopoeic edifice, Havel's father added another fabled establishment: the Barrandov concert-cafe, which film buffs can see in the classical Czech film *Ecstasy* by Gustav Machaty. From this open-air cafe, one can walk along a winding row of beautiful modernistic villas also built by Havel's father, to the celebrated film studios on top of the Barrandov Hill—the creation of Havel's uncle, Milos, a pioneer of film-as-art in Czechoslovakia.

Havel's maternal grandfather was a self-made man: born into a desperately poor Silesian family, he became eventually a writer, an economist, Czechoslovakia's ambassador to various countries and, for a short time, minister in the government of Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, the founder and first president of the Czechoslovak Republic.

These intelligent and creative ancestors only complicated Vaclav Havel's life. As a capitalist's son, he was denied education beyond grade eight. He was apprenticed to a carpenter, later worked as a laboratory technician, and eventually attended courses at an evening grammar school where social-class requirements were not as strict as in the daytime compulsory institutions. He then applied repeatedly for admission to the Film Faculty of Prague's Performing Arts Academy (FAMU). He had to start his two years of military service in 1957, from which he was discharged in 1959. Following a new unsuccessful application to FAMU, He was given the job of stage hand in Prague's ABC Theater—only because the theater's director, Jan Wench, a very popular film and stage star, and a prominent pre-World War II anti-fascist comedian, had been a close friend of his Uncle Milos in whose films he performed. After one year at the ABC, Havel joined the experimental Theater on the Ballustrade, first as stage hand, later as literary advisor, and eventually, when in the mid-sixties the policies of the party became more "liberal," as author. All of his plays produced in Czechoslovakia were written for and staged by this unique company. There were only three—*The Garden Party*, *The Memorandum*, and *The Increased Difficulty of Concentration*—for after the Soviet invasion all Havel's works, both pre- and post-1968, were banned. Yet they belong among the most important comedies Czechoslovakia has ever produced and are performed, in translation, all over the world.

On the surface, these examinations of modern life are comedies satirizing various vices engendered by totalitarian bureaucracies: the misuse and misinterpretation of language, subservience, cowardice, the reductio of the human being to a cog in the wheel of impersonal power. But underneath they are profound examinations of the alienation of humans in a world that is becoming progressively more mechanistic, dehumanized and depersonalized. Although their principal targets are the systems that brought these malignant tendencies most radically to life—fascism and communism—the validity of many of Havel's observations is not entirely restricted to countries where the malignancies are most deeply rooted.

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Long before he started writing plays, Havel had become active on the literary scene, always on the side of the suppressed, ignored and persecuted. When in 1955, after Khrushchev's revelations of Stalin's crimes, the confused Party gave its rebellious young writers their first literary journal *Kveten (May)*, Havel fought for the right of the politically unattached to have a journal of *their* own. He did that with a logic and daring rarely found in the Communist empire. At a literary conference, for instance, when called on to discuss the state of Czech poetry in 1956—the year of the anti-Soviet uprising in Hungary—he grabbed the opportunity to plead for poets banned and, in several cases, jailed after the Communist putch of 1948.

Nobody before him had had the courage to as much as mention this well-known fact, and therefore Havel's speech shocked the audience into silence. Finally, a rather famous Communist novelist took the microphone and announced her astonishment that Havel was talking about "some forgotten poets while socialism was fighting for its life in the streets of Budapest." Havel, very logically, responded that he "didn't understand how they could hold an expensive conference on Czech poetry when it was forbidden to talk about Czech poets." At many similar literary conferences in the sixties he always confronted demagogy with a similar unswerving Aristotelian logic so that a prominent member of the Party Secretariat let himself be heard—prophetically, as we know now—"Havel's going to be a dangerous fellow for us."

Havel took an increasingly more important part in the literary life of the country. He served on the editorial board of another literary journal for young writers *Tvar (The Face)*, which eventually closed down in 1965, like its predecessor *Kveten*, because its editorial policies displeased the establishment. At this time, Havel also started writing essays on film and cultural politics, unmasking, as in his plays, the falsities, pretensions, hypocrisies, lies, misuses of language and of power practiced by the totalitarians. In 1968, the year of Dubcek's attempt at reform, he founded the Club of Engaged Non-Party Writers, advocated the revival of the banned Social Democratic Party, and found—and announced that he had found—listening devices installed by the secret police in his apartment on the embankment of the Moldau.

Then the tanks came.

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Havel's story after the advent of the armoured chariots is one of unwavering courage and of principled defense of democratic ideals and human dignity. Throughout most of the next two decades he was under constant police surveillance. The establishment went to such absurd lengths as to have a wooden observation tower erected only a few dozen yards from Havel's country retreat. There, cops were on round-the-clock duty taking pictures of and filming people who dared to visit the banned writer. Identified by these films and photographs, many were later interrogated.

Havel himself was detained many times, repeatedly questioned, and held in jail without charge. In 1977 he was sentenced to fourteen months of imprisonment for having written an Open Letter to the Communist President Gustav Husak. In 1979 he received a four-and-a-half year sentence for his activities in the dissident Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted. He served in a hard labor camp until January 1983 when he almost died of untreated pneumonia. The authorities, scared that the death of an internationally famous playwright would be bad publicity, transferred him to a civilian hospital and, in March 1983, released him for home treatment.

But he was arrested again, in January 1989, for taking part in student demonstrations held to commemorate the death of Jan Palach, a student of Charles University in Prague who in 1969 set himself on fire to protest the Soviet occupation. Havel was sentenced to six months in jail but was released after three when the government succumbed to strong domestic and foreign pressure. Then, on November 17, 1989—exactly fifty years after another Charles University student, Jan Opletal, had been murdered by Nazi police during a demonstration against the German occupation of Czechoslovakia—students armed with flowers were massacred in downtown Prague by karate-trained Red Beret units of the riot police. Many were seriously wounded, some crippled for life. The patience of the population overflew. Hundreds of thousands took to the streets, and the seemingly invincible power of the Communist police state collapsed in a few days like the proverbial house of cards.

Shortly afterwards, students distributed leaflets with Havel's picture and the slogan: HAVEL TO THE CASTLE!

Soon after that, the life-long defender of the rights of the powerless was elected Czechoslovakia's ninth President.

Incomparably more than anyone else, this short, inconspicuous man contributed to the survival of democratic ideas on the desert of totalitarian, occupied and subdued Czechoslovakia. He influenced above all, the students who were the main target of Communist indoctrination. He did so by his personal example of moral integrity, civic courage, and civil disobedience, and by his important post-invasion essays, which circulated among the people in carbon copies of the original typescripts.

In late 1976 he co-founded Charter 77, a loosely organized, non-violent dissident group which challenged the government to respect its own constitution. As is the case with many totalitarian regimes, the Czechoslovak constitution does not differ very much from that of the United States—on paper. In actual fact, of course, the Communist government ignored the rights "guaranteed" by its own laws and violated every single one of them. Since there was no free press in spite of the constitution which "guaranteed" free press—the regime largely got away with such violations—and would get away with them absolutely if it were not for associations like Charter 77. Over the years, this group, in the *samizdat* manner published dozens of papers, exposing all sorts of

political, judicial, and ecological ills, such as racism *vis-a-vis* the Gypsies or the pollution of northwestern Bohemia, the heaviest in Europe. Normally, this is the business of a free press; in its absence, it had to be done by the courageous dissidents of Charter 77. Havel was one of the Charter's first spokesmen.

All those years he also wrote plays which, although not produced in his native country, have made his name a household word among theater-goers in all Western countries, including the U.S. There they were produced first by Joseph Papp's New York Public Theater, then by many other professional and student theaters. His international fame, and the many awards and honorary doctorates he received protected him, to a certain degree, against the wrath of the Czechoslovak authorities which he incurred with the incisive political essays he wrote during the seventies and eighties.

In these essays he identified fear of the consequences of civic courage as the deciding factor that forces people into seeming consent with the oppressive policies of the establishment, as is periodically "demonstrated" by the notorious 99.99% election results. At the same time he stressed, in those remarkable philosophical treatises, that the powerlessness of the powerless is an illusion born out of that fear: that little acts of everyday courage, to which his great predecessor in the presidential office, Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, had exhorted citizens, would accumulate and eventually lead to a return of democracy.

As the events of November 1989 showed, he was right.

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Havel's greatest adventure is his latest one. But the word is only a metaphor. Rarely, if ever, in modern history was a man better prepared for the historic role of restoring democracy to his country, than this thoughtful playwright who learned what democracy is by decades of bitter, harsh personal experience. After the Battle of Britain, Winston Churchill spoke about the few to whom, as never before in history, so many owed so much. For a half-century Czechoslovakia has had no professional politicians, except Communist hacks. Now she is lead by a playwright and a group of his friends who have had no political training, except the school of Communist jails and harrassment. To paraphrase Churchill: Never in modern history do so many expect so much from so few.

But then, these few are graduates of twenty years of dissent; they are used to their small numbers and great courage and intelligence. Who and where they are today they do not owe to political intrigue or to the support of mighty organizational machines. They, and the president as a real *primus inter pares*, simply had the guts to stand on the side of the truth through all those long years when truth—and rightly so—was regarded a dangerous enemy of the totalitarian government. The large multitudes of people have always known the truth, but most denied it, as Peter denied Christ. But eventually even the cowardly Peter took courage from Jesus' example. Eventually, the large multitudes of people imitated the courage of their future president, and put an end to the rule of the Lie.

JOSEF SKVORECKY, *an award-winning Czechoslovak writer, is the author of many books of fiction, including* The Cowards, Miss Silver's Past, The Bass Saxaphone, The Engineer of Human Souls *and* The Miracle Game. *A member of the Club of Engaged Non-Party Writers founded by Vaclav Havel in 1968, he emigrated to Canada after the Soviet invasion, and is Professor of American Literature at the University of Toronto.*

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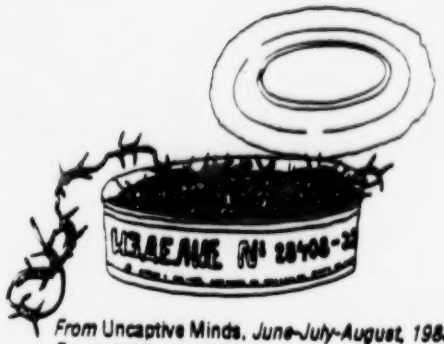
Cartoon 1 is from 1988, by an Eastern European artist; the writing is in cyrillic, the lettering of the Russian language, and says "product number." Cartoons 2, 3, and 4 were created by American artists in late-1989/early-1990.

Cartoon 1: What does the artist think the Soviet system has produced? Is he hopeless about the prospects for change?

Cartoon 2: What do you think the cartoon is saying about the U.S.S.R.'s ability to hold the Soviet bloc together? What does it predict for the future? Do you think it is right?

Cartoon 3: What does the cartoon say about the pace of change in Eastern Europe? From what you know about Czechoslovakia, do you agree? Who in Czechoslovakia do you think would like to hit either the pause or rewind buttons?

Cartoon 4: What is the artist trying to say about the Czechoslovak Communist Party's ability to command the nation?



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Don Wright, The Palm Beach Post. *Reprinted with permission.*

VOCABULARY

bureaucratic Describes a government administered chiefly through bureaus staffed by nonelected officials. An officious, rigid and/or unresponsive system of administration or government.

Helsinki Conference A 1975 conference, held in Helsinki, Finland, in which the U.S., the Soviet Union, Canada and 32 eastern and western European nations participated. Participating nations negotiated and signed an agreement, known as the Helsinki Accords, which fixed post-WWII European national boundaries and set down human rights standards which all signatory nations pledged to observe.

Iron Curtain The political, social, cultural and military barrier between the Soviet bloc and western countries that was institutionalized by communist governments after World War II. The most visible symbols of this division were the barbed wire fences strung between communist Eastern European countries and the West and the Berlin Wall which divided West Berlin from communist East Berlin. The phrase was originated by Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1940-1945, in a March 1946 speech to the graduates of Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri.

"normalization" Refers to return of tight Communist Party control over Czechoslovak life following the suppression of the Prague Spring reform movement.

parliamentary government Unlike the U.S. government, which has separate executive and legislative branches, most parliamentary systems stipulate that the party which holds the most seats in the parliament will appoint (or elect) executives to administer the government.

polis An organized society, government or center of power. A city-state of ancient Greece.

Prague Spring The culmination, in the spring of 1968, of the late 1960s reform movement in Czechoslovakia, marked by a flowering of the arts and a relaxation of censorship and other restrictions—cut short by the Warsaw Pact invasion in August 1968.

proletariat In Marxist theory, the class of industrial wage earners who, possessing neither capital nor the means of production, must earn their living by selling their labor.

propaganda The systematic propagation of a particular ideology or doctrine, or of statements or allegations reflecting the views and interests of an ideology, doctrine or sect.

samizdat A Russian word that literally means self-publication. Used in the Soviet bloc to refer to banned and other underground material which was self-printed or copied and circulated in defiance of the communist government.

socialism with a human face

A phrase used by the reformist 1968 Czechoslovak government of Alexander Dubcek which implied a lessening of bureaucratic control over, and a tolerance of, the individual needs and desires of Czechoslovak citizens. Also used by reformists in Yugoslavia in the late 1960s and the 1970s, and occassionally used to refer to the policies of Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union today.

state monopoly

In a traditional communist system, the Communist Party controls the government and the government owns all of the means of production. The state owns the raw materials and sets the price level paid by a manufacturing plant; the state owns the manufacturing plant and sets production quotas, the wages of the workers and the price of the finished goods; the state owns the stores in which the goods are sold, etc.

U. N. Declaration of Human Rights

A document adopted unanimously by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948 which sets forth ideals and standards of government conduct towards the human rights of all individuals. Following its passage, the Assembly called on all member nations to disseminate and publicize the Declaration. Despite their governments' official support for this document, in Soviet bloc countries (and many others) the printing or distribution of the Declaration was banned.

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Divide students into seven groups. Assign each group one period of Czechoslovak history (1918-1939, the invasion of the Nazis, liberation and the Communist coup, the Stalinist purges, the Prague Spring, the 1968 invasion, the events leading up to the resignation of the Czechoslovak communist leaders in December 1989) and have each group write and enact a newscast based on a key event in each period.

2. Choose a leader of a democratic movement from the past or present other than Vaclav Havel (Lech Walesa, George Washington, T. G. Masaryk, Thomas Jefferson, Benigno Aquino, Gandhi, etc.) and write a portrait of him or her using a set of related documents, similar to the set presented here.

3. Using your knowledge of our Bill of Rights, and what you know about the demands that Vaclav Havel and other dissidents had, design a model Bill of Rights for the new Czechoslovak government.

4. Research the tactics used by Martin Luther King, Jr. and A. Philip Randolph in winning civil rights for African Americans. Compare them with the tactics used by Czechoslovak dissidents to win democracy, human and civil rights for their country. Write a report explaining the advantages and disadvantages of each group of people.

5. Choose one other country in Eastern Europe and make a timeline of events in its quest for freedom. Illustrate your timeline. If a computer is available, draw your timeline, using the *Timeliner* computer program. Cover the time period 1919-1990.

6. In Havel's New Years' Day address, he asks, "Where did young people who had never known another system get their longing for truth, their love of freedom, their political imagination, their civic courage and civic responsibility?" Write an essay that answers this question.

7. Divide students into small groups. Assign each group one country that has emerged from dictatorship (Poland, the Phillipines, Spain, Japan, Argentina, Panama, Chile) and have them research the circumstances under which the dictatorship was ended (or perhaps not yet completely ended). Within each group have two students consider what effect external forces may have had, two others what institutions played key roles (churches, unions, civic groups, the military, etc.), two others what role(s) the most significant leader(s) played.

Reorganize students into new groups according to their speciality. Each new group should prepare to argue that the factors that they studied (outside forces, internal institutions, or outstanding leaders) were most important in bringing down the dictatorship. Each student should then write a short essay on what combination of factors seems necessary to successfully defeat a dictatorship.

8. In the last document presented, the editor of *Rude Pravo* notes that the control the Communist Party had over all segments of society will make it difficult for him to investigate the secret police. What other difficulties do you imagine democratization will face?

Think about the needs and difficulties that might be inherent in separating the press, property, religion, student organizations, unions, an educational system, the arts and other civic institutions from the state. Follow the newspapers over the next several weeks, noting different problems that the Czechoslovaks and other Eastern Europeans will have to overcome if they are to create a stable, democratic society. Develop a scrap book documenting the growth, or lack thereof, of independent civic institutions in Eastern European countries.

9. Consider the fate of such short-lived democratic regimes as Czechoslovakia in 1946-48, Weimar Germany in the 1920s, Haiti in the late 1940s, Poland in the 1920s and the Russian Provisional Government of 1917. Split the class into five groups and assign one of the countries to each. Have them look at the political traditions, economic conditions, relations between the socio/economic classes, character of the activist movements, role of external forces, and roles of the key individuals in their country. Have each group report on what factors they think are necessary for a democratic society to flourish. Ask the class to try to use these findings to predict the future of Czechoslovakia.

10. The first free elections in Czechoslovakia since 1948 are scheduled for June 1990. Go through the newspaper for the next few weeks and find old newspaper articles on Czechoslovakia since November 1989. Find out who ca

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